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ABSTRACT

This book analyzes the notions that are "fashionable" in the humanities today, arguing against the orthodoxy that has installed race, gender, and class perspectives at the center of college humanities curricula. The book contends that humanistic education today, far from being historically aware, relies on anachronistic thinking; far from being skeptical of Western values, represents a "ruthless and unskeptical" Western extremism; far from being valuable in bringing political perspectives to bear, presents politics that are "unreal"; far from being sophisticated in matters of "theory," is largely "ignorant" of the range and history of critical theory; and far from valuing diversity, is unable to respond to the great sweep of literature. Following an introduction, the book's chapters are titled: (1) The Origins of Political Correctness; (2) The Diversity of Literature; (3) Gender, Politics, and Criticism; (4) The Academic Politics of Race; (5) Class and Perfect Egalitarianism; (6) Activism and Knowledge; (7) Power, Objectivity, and PC Logic; (8) Is Theory to Blame?; and (9) How Did It All Happen--And What Comes Next? The conclusion examines the prospects for future change. (NKA)

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